



The Inclusion Club

Working Together for Paralympic Sport in Oceania

Interview Transcript

These interview transcripts are from video interviews conducted with Andrew Bynon and Fred Fatiaki during the London 2012 Paralympic Games. They were made for [The Inclusion Club](http://theinclusionclub.com/episodes/oceania/) Episode on the impact of Paralympic sport in the Oceania region. You can see the full episode here:

<http://theinclusionclub.com/episodes/oceania/>

Andrew Bynon



“My name is Andrew Bynon and I am the Chef de Mission of the Vanuatu Paralympic team. I am also involved as the Secretary General of the Vanuatu Paralympic Committee and in this Paralympics I have a bigger role which is working with all the Oceania countries and Pacific Island countries, just coordinating our approach so that we are working together as one team.

I think the impact of Marcel making the first final for either the Paralympics or Olympics is going to have a big impact on disability sport but also on sport in general. I think that we now have a lot of publicity at home. We've had feedback from different organisations. Government officials are talking about how proud they are. To have a Vanuatu person competing in the final and how this is a massive achievement because we've only been running this organisation for three years. So in three years to come from this not to have a lot of funding and to get someone into a final, people are amazed that has happened. It's now our opportunity to capitalize on that and to work with governments and the NGOs and sporting federations to incorporate sport for people with disability into different areas. And this is a real chance for us to push out into other areas in Vanuatu as we are really only in one Province at the moment. This is a real chance for us to incorporate this into our national games and if we can get into the national games it means that it will open up sport for people with disability throughout the entire country because that will give people a motivation. They'll get interested because they will want to do things for their Province and that is what we hope is what we will achieve.

I think that one of the other opportunities will be the possibility of funding. Hopefully this will open a few doors with the Vanuatu government, hopefully through the Ministry of Youth and Sport and also through the Ministry of Womens Affaires, where disability sits under. Looking at sport being a vehicle for other possibilities as well so using sport as a tool for development, and I think that's a big opportunity for us.

I guess one of the big things that we've found in trying to provide sporting opportunities for people with disability is that there is a perception that the people going out there to run the programs are doing it for their own gain. So that people in the village think that we have a motivation to find people with a disability and then exploit them to some extent so that we are making money out of them. I really hope that this is an opportunity where we can say that

"look at what Marcel's done" and that it is not about us at all. It's about the country, it's about people with a disability and it's not about personal gain.

The biggest thing that we've done is that we've come together as a group of Pacific Island nations and we've shared resources. We know that we don't have enough resources to each do this by ourselves so we've come here and we've had one or two athletes each, then we've come together as a team, that makes a group of 10 plus our staff. That gives us a lot bigger feeling as a team. It's given us links into different countries and we are looking ahead at the next 4 years and we are looking at how we can do it together as a region and working together to share minimal resources in the Pacific.

Fred Fatiaki



Hello, my name is Fred Fatiaki and I work with the Fiji Paralympic Committee back in Fiji. And I work as a Sports Development Officer. I look after grass roots programs back at home.

What has happened here at the Paralympics with the achievements that Iliesa

has done, it's been history in the making for people back at home. He's the first Fijian to win a medal for with Paralympics or Olympics and it's a big boost for the awareness of people with disabilities back at home as it will boost their moral to see what Iliesa has achieved. For the community at large, they will surely look at people with disabilities in a much more different way now with the achievement that has been done and the awareness that Iliesa has done in this big level of competition. This will surely promote Fiji as a whole in the world map and also people with disabilities back home especially. And as they approach things in life, not only in sports, but in general, such as school or study or whatever they are good at in life, I think this is a good opening for them and for good awareness for the country as a whole.

After what has happened now we are hoping that in the future, years to come, funding from the government and from the corporate bodies back at home will assist not only the international level of competition but also some of the grass roots programs that could help assist those young kids that maybe have a dream of trying to follow in Iliesa's footsteps to become a Paralympian or even an Olympic athlete. So I think this is a good opening that all the government departments and corporate bodies will surely give a hand in trying to develop sport as a whole, not only for people with disabilities but people participating in sports trying to keep themselves healthy. So it's a good thing, it's history in the making and we hope that sports will really grow with the achievement that Iliesa has done for Fiji.

And I would like to thank you for giving me this opportunity to express what we have achieved so far and I personally hope, we personally hope, that all that we are doing here is for the benefit of people with disabilities, not only in Fiji but all over the world, that they may, given the opportunity, to showcase their abilities in whatever level they can. With those few words thank you very much and god bless.

Thanks to Andrew and Fred for their cooperation with these interviews.